

Message Text

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QUOTE

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STATE OPS CENTER FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY TO DAVID GOMPERT
FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

SECRETARY'S MIDDLE EAST TRIP-I (TAKE TWO OF THREE)

LONDON: BRITISH MEDIA PROMINENTLY REPORTED SECRETARY
KISSINGER'S DEPARTURE ON A MISSION "LIKELY TO PROVE A TURNING
POINT" WITH BOTH INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS.

U.S. EDITOR PAUL LEWIS WROTE MONDAY IN THE FINANCIAL TIMES
THAT MR. KISSINGER WAS OFF ON "A TRIP THAT IS LIKELY TO PROVE
A TURNING POINT, BOTH FOR HIS EFFORTS TO BRING PEACE TO THE
AREA AND IN HIS DRIVE TO KEEP U.S. FOREIGN POLICY OUT OF NEXT
YEAR'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

"IF HE CANNOT LAY THE GROUNDWORK, THIS TIME, FOR SUCH A
RESUMPTION OF HIS 'STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO A SETTLEMENT,
THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE WILL FIND HIMSELF UNDER INCREASING
PRESSURE TO CHANGE TACTICS ALTOGETHER AND OPT, INSTEAD, FOR
RECONVENING THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE -- SOMETHING HE HAS
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RESISTED IN THE PAST.

"HIS PERSONAL PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE WOULD OBVIOUSLY SUFFER IF HE CANNOT COAX THE ISRAELIS AND EGYPTIANS TO TAKE ANOTHER STEP TOWARDS PEACE, AND THE CHANCES OF ANOTHER WAR WOULD ALSO STRENGTHEN. IN DOMESTIC, AMERICAN TERMS, A DISAPPOINTING OUTCOME OF THIS VISIT WOULD FURTHER INCREASE THE POLITICAL CONTROVERSY THAT IS GROWING AROUND HIS HANDLING OF FOREIGN POLICY."

DEFENSE EXPERT LORD CHALFONT, WRITING IN THE TIMES OF LONDON, THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE "POSSIBLE TO TAKE A FEW SMALL STEPS AWAY FROM THE EDGE OF INEVITABLE DISASTER" IN THE MIDDLE EAST -- A "MODEST HOPE" BASED ON THE POSSIBILITY OF "SOME KIND OF DEAL BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT WHICH WOULD LEAD TO A CHANCE OF WIDER AGREEMENT AT A RESUMED GENEVA CONFERENCE."

ARGUING THAT "THE AIM IS NOT ONLY THE IMMEDIATE ONE OF AVERTING A DANGEROUS WAR BUT THE LONGER TERM ONE OF PREVENTING THE WHOLE OF THE MIDDLE EAST FROM BECOMING A RUSSIAN SPHERE OF INFLUENCE," LORD CHALFONT HELD THAT "THERE SHOULD NOW BE A CLEAR PERCEPTION IN WESTERN EUROPE THAT WE HAVE, IN THE MIDDLE EAST, A COMMON INTEREST WITH THE UNITED STATES, NOT ONLY IN AVOIDING ANOTHER WAR, BUT ALSO IN PREVENTING A RUSSIAN TAKE-OVER."

THE TIMES ALSO CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT SADAT BY CORRESPONDENT A.M. RENDEL IN CAIRO: "ON THE EVE OF DR. KISSINGER'S NEW ROUND OF TALKS, PRESIDENT ANWAR AS-SADAT OF EGYPT SPOKE TO ME...OF THE DELICATE STAGE NOW REACHED IN NEGOTIATIONS TO FIND A WAY FORWARD IN THE MIDDLE EAST." RENDEL SAID THE PRESIDENT DECLARED HE "WAS PREPARED TO LET THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE HAVE HIS CHANCE TO SEE IF A STEP-BY-STEP AGREEMENT WAS POSSIBLE, BUT TIME WAS RUNNING SHORT."

SIZING UP THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION FROM HIS POST IN WASHINGTON, CORRESPONDENT HENRY BRANDON OF THE SUNDAY TIMES POINTED OUT, "DR. KISSINGER IS NOT IN THE HABIT OF GOING ON FUTILE DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, AND THE FACT THAT HE HAS CONCLUDED THAT THIS IS THE TIME FOR ANOTHER MAJOR EFFORT IS AN INDICATION THAT HE NOT ONLY FEELS THAT BOTH SIDES ARE NOW IN A MOOD TO DO BUSINESS AND TO ENGAGE IN SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS, BUT ALSO THAT THE RELATIVELY FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR ANOTHER INTERIM AGREEMENT ARE UNLIKELY TO LAST FOR LONG."

THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH REMARKED IN A WASHINGTON-DATELINED UNCLASSIFIED

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STORY THAT THE SECRETARY "FLIES TO THE MIDDLE EAST... INCREASINGLY HANDICAPPED BY UNPRECEDENTED DOMESTIC CRITICISM. PRESIDENT FORD IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECT THAT CONSTANT POLITICAL SNIPING COULD HAVE ON DR. KISSINGER'S STANDING AND MORALE."

THE LONDON SUNDAY OBSERVER STRUCK A SIMILAR NOTE IN AN EDITORIAL VIEWING MR. KISSINGER AS DEPARTING "AMID GROWING SIGNS THAT THE PROCEDURE FOR MAKING AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

HAS NOW ENTERED A DIFFICULT NEW PHASE. AFTER YEARS OF DOMINATION BY THE TWO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS, NAMELY THE PRESIDENT AND HIS SECRETARY OF STATE, THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS NOW AGAIN BEING EFFECTIVELY CHALLENGED AND INFLUENCED BY CONGRESS.

PARIS: FRENCH TELEVISION GAVE HEAVY PLAY TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S MIDDLE EAST MISSION LAST NIGHT WITH REPORTERS SAYING THAT WASHINGTON VIEWS THE TRIP AS A "LAST CHANCE OPERATION." COMMENTATOR JACQUES BELLAY SAID THAT IF KISSINGER FAILED IT WOULD MEAN "A FAILURE FOR ALL AMERICAN DIPLOMACY."

FINANCIAL LES ECHOES DECLARED MONDAY: "BEFORE TAKING UP HIS PILGRIM'S STICK, HENRY KISSINGER SAID THAT SHOULD HIS NEW EFFORT FAIL, HE WOULD GIVE UP HIS STEP-BY-STEP NEGOTIATING POLICY...HE IS PLAYING A DIFFICULT GAME AND HIS COUNTERPART, GROMYKO, IS WAITING FOR HIM IN GENEVA AT THE END OF THE WEEK WHEN HIS MIDDLE EAST TRIP IS OVER.... SALT AND CSCE ARE ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS SOVIET-AMERICAN MEETING. LITTLE WONDER IF THE SOVIETS ARE RAISING THEIR ANTE AT THE CSCE..."

INTELLECTUAL-LEFT LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS NOTED THAT "MR. KISSINGER HAS MANAGED TO PATCH UP HIS IMAGE ABROAD. YET, THE WEAKENING OF HIS PERSONAL POSITION WITHIN THE AMERICAN POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT -- ESPECIALLY DUE TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE DEMOCRATIC-DOMINATED CONGRESS, CONSTANTLY INCREASING IN HIS CONDUCT OF DIPLOMACY -- IS BLUNTING HIS CREDIBILITY WITH HIS ARAB AND ISRAELI COUNTERPARTS.

"BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT HENRY KISSINGER IS THE ONLY MAN WHO CONTINUES TO HOLD THE TRUST OF RABIN AND SADAT, BOTH OF WHOM STILL APPEAR TO WISH FIRMLY FOR THE CONCLUSION OF AN INTERIM AGREEMENT BEFORE ANY RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE."

WRITING IN MODERATE RIGHT L'AUORE, ROLAND FAURE ASSERTED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD NOT "ARRIVE EMPTY-HANDED IN UNCLASSIFIED

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CAIRO. YITZHAK RABIN'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT ISRAEL IS READY TO GIVE BACK THE MITLA AND GIDI PASSES AND THE ABU RUDEIS OIL WELLS IS A MOST IMPORTANT CONCESSION AND VERY CLEVER BECAUSE IT DRIVES SADAT INTO A CORNER." FAURE WONDERED "WHETHER SADAT'S ATTITUDE WOULD HARDEN FOLLOWING HIS RECENT TALKS WITH GROMYKO...OR WILL HE FINALLY GIVE PRIORITY TO THE REAL PROBLEMS OF HIS COUNTRY'S WOBBLY ECONOMY AND DECIDED TO GAMBLE ON A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IN WHICH CONSIDERABLE AMERICAN AID AND SUBSTANTIAL INCOME FROM REOPENING THE CANAL WOULD PLAY A PART. MR. KISSINGER'S LAST CHANCE IS INDEED IN MR. SADAT'S HANDS. THEIR MEETING WILL ALSO BE A TEST OF THE FRIENDSHIP WHICH BOTH SO READILY CLAIM FOR ONE ANOTHER."

ROME: INDEPENDENT CORRIERE DELLA SERA, IN A FRONTPAGE ARTICLE HEADLINED "KISSINGER BEGINS PEACE MISSION," CONTENDED TODAY THAT "THIS MISSION AIMS AT SOLVING THE

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS BY KEEPING THE USSR AS FAR OUTSIDE
NEGOTIATIONS AS POSSIBLE." IN ANOTHER ARTICLE THE PAPER STATED
THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER "IS THE ONLY PERSON WHO ENJOYS THE
CONFIDENCE OF BOTH RABIN AND SADAT. THIS IS WHY HIS MISSION
HAS SOME CHANCE OF SUCCESS."

SUNDAY'S IL GIORNALE CARRIED AN ARTICLE HEADED "ISRAEL
IS HARD NUT TO CRACK FOR KISSINGER" IN WHICH THE PAPER'S
ISRAELI CORRESPONDENT ALLEGED THAT MR. KISSINGER, "IN TALKING
TO THE PRESS PARTY, HINTED A DOUBLE THREAT THAT WAS
PARTICULARLY ADDRESSED TO ISRAEL. THE THREAT WAS THAT IF HIS
MISSION FAILED, HE WOULD DISCUSS WITH GROMYKO, ON FEBRUARY 17,
A RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE." (END TAKE TWO)
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